

## **Project Update: December 2010**

A second field trip to the project area was undertaken from 17<sup>th</sup> – 21<sup>st</sup> December 2010. The objective of the trip was to further engage the SSG and the community on matters pertaining to SSG organization, IBA conservation and protection, envisaged development of a community camp for avian tourism vis-à-vis community input and collection of data for a species conservation plan.

A participatory qualitative data collection exercise to input into the conservation action plan and planning for Avian tourism has since been conducted with the help of two Sesheke-based officials from the forestry department, community development and social welfare and ZAWA. Besides data collection, a session to discuss and develop community-based byelaws pertaining to conservation and management of a portion of the IBA comprising Magumwi-Machile area was held and draft byelaws made.

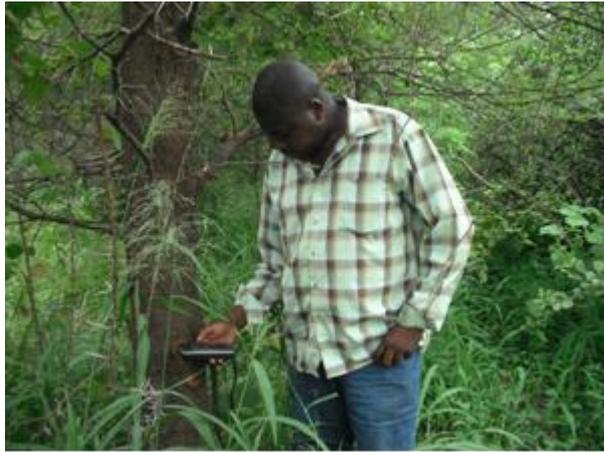
The vision of diversifying into avian tourism with full involvement of the community has been discussed and agreed. During deliberations, an area earlier identified as a potential site for the construction of the community camp has since been abandoned for another which is centrally located, more accessible and ideal for construction of simple accommodation facilities for people from all walks of life; including politicians and the like who frequent the area.

As is normal practice in Zambia, the SSG and the community through the traditional leadership from the surrounding 12 villages would contribute approximately 25% of the project cost. This would include land, locally available materials such as round poles, sand, stones and the like.

Works towards the development of the species conservation plan for the black-cheeked lovebird have advanced with data on bird counts available. Feedback on data collection was obtained and more is expected from the local monitors through post. The Biodiversity Monitoring Coordinator at ZOS offices shall soon commence analysis and compilation of this data.

Formalisation of the local conservation group has not yet been completed due to unforeseen logistical setbacks relating to documentation. However, the field trip has resulted in successful completion of all the required paperwork in Sesheke District. Registration will soon be completed in Lusaka. Documents have been certified and authenticated at Sesheke District Council and support paper got from the Forestry Department.

It is however very clear that in order for avian tourism to develop and thrive in Machile IBA and the black-cheeked lovebird range, alternative sources of fresh water for visitors and tourists must be found. More information on water engineering options is being sought. The area lies in a low rainfall region and has salty underground water.



Top left: Grant receipt (Moses) taking GPS coordinates for a site selected as ideal for community the camp in the project area. © Kelvin Mkandawire. Top right: A typical habitat for Black cheeked lovebird after recovery form annual fires. © Moses Nyoni. Middle left: Follow-up dialogue via focus group discussion. © Moses Nyoni. Middle right: General community meeting reflecting on Bye-laws and the envisaged community camp for avian tourism. © Moses Nyoni. Bottom: Women's focussed group discussion on women views on the camp, conservation and bye laws (Community development Officer facilitating). © Moses Nyoni.